



The Missionary Ship of the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel (S.F.G.).

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AUSTRALIA (N. Queensland).

REPORT OF WEIPA MISSION STATION FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1917.

Characteristics.

ANOTHER year, in passing, has borne evidence to the fact that the Aboriginal is not a national asset. Nor will he for long, in his pure-blooded condition at least, be a liability.

The record of six births against sixteen deaths, which gives a net decrease of ten, makes a big gap in our small community. All told, we could now muster about 230.

Practically all of these are resident on the Reserve and draw rations for longer or shorter periods under some form or other, either when engaged in communal work or as sick, aged or infirm, as school children, or in the form of barter for sandalwood or bêche-de-mer.

The exceedingly high price of galvanised iron has prevented us from coping with the demand for more houses for the ever-increasing number of those who wish to settle down and own a house and garden. The result is that practically every house on the station is occupied by two or three families, and thus it has become a matter of possessing, not a house, but a "bunk," and having a share in the garden.

On the whole, the conduct of the community has been good. The people occasionally hold an "Assize Court," in the form of a discussion on misdemeanours and a punishing of a delinquent by spearing, and such "Courts" have a salutary effect. Where moral suasion fails they often will be effective. As Superintendent of the station we have on a few occasions had to enforce discipline by the cutting off from the benefits of the station for awhile of this or that person.

Of really serious crime there has been none, the most serious being adultery, which to the Native mind is hardly a crime, unless with it there goes a marked preference for the illegal party as against the lawful husband or wife, as the case may be.

Lest it be thought, because of what I have just said, that our people are absolutely uncivilized, I would mention the fact that about thirty families are gardening on their own account. Which means that the Aboriginal is learning to look ahead a little and to suppress his natural indolence.

Spiritual.

In the nature of things it is much more difficult to measure or weigh and tabulate results in this than in some other sections. For whereas there we may use our eyes even more than our ears, for this the ear gathers more information than the eye, which same may be, and often is, far less reliable. Speaking generally, such visible evidence as we have is not very encouraging. For, whilst there are many who claim to be Christians, but few rate their Christianity highly enough to spend much time seeking after it, unless with it there is coupled some temporal gain. This applies specially to the men and the older women. The young women whom we have educated are a grand exception. They are the most hopeful element. It is not that there is any antagonism to Christianity, nor much absolute indifference, but just the natural native indolence. When this is so far subdued that a person attends Divine service, the attention and general demeanour are remarkably good.

Services are held morning and evening, on Sundays, and on Wednesday evenings, and every morning a short service before commencing the day's work. On the generally recognised Church festivals special efforts are always made, in the form of special singing and scriptural repetition by the children.

As Weipa has a special interest in the work at Mornington Island, in that three of the Mission families who have participated in the work there had first of all laboured for awhile here, and two of the missionary children were baptized here, and some of the Weipa people had assisted in the work there during the two first years, we decided in July to give the people an opportunity of shewing their practical Christianity by having a share in the first church building which might be erected there. Accordingly a treasury-box was made, and placed for a month in the church as a silent appeal to receive such contributions as those who had a little money might be disposed to give. The

result, 12s. 3d., was not a large sum, unless measured by the fact that a man's weekly pocket money, when he is working, is sixpence, and that from it he has to buy his tobacco and as much of his clothing as he can.

Educational.

For yet another year this work, in common with all the other work of the station, has been conducted under difficulties, by reason of our having no teacher and no assistant for the industrial work. Thus the writer and his wife have been obliged to squeeze the school-work in between the various other duties as best they could. Consequently, I am afraid that our school would now not bear an inspection and comparison with other schools more favourably situated.

The two female assistant-teachers, ex-pupils, now married, have again rendered good service throughout the year. By them and the bigger girls a fair amount of sewing and knitting was done for the Red Cross.

Other educational work includes Sunday-school, a weekly sewing class for all the women, followed by religious instruction, and the weekly drill of the "Boys' Brigade."

Health.

We are too far removed from civilisation to have a visit from a medical officer, and consequently we have to do the best we can for the sick and wounded. We had sixteen deaths during the year. Measles was the active cause in seven of these, though in each case there was some other predisposing cause. Another was an accident case—a lad brought to us from a neighbouring cattle-station with a fractured ankle, which, by the time the poor fellow reached us, nothing but an amputation could have saved. For that we had no appliances, and so we had to confine ourselves to trying to draw the poison out and relieving various symptoms as they appeared by such remedies as we possessed.

As indicated above, we had an epidemic of measles, which lingered on from September to November. On account of most of the children being down with it, the school had to be closed for just over two weeks. In many of its subjects it has left a weakness which shews itself in a tendency to "catch cold" very easily.

We have a never-failing succession of minor ailments—lung, stomach, and eye cases.

In a goodly number of cases relief has been given to sufferers from toothache, from our own and other stations, by extraction of the troublesome member.

Industrial.

1st. *Communal.* According to our ability, *i.e.*, to the extent of available funds, we employ men at the general work of the station—agriculture, fencing, building, and the general repair of wear and tear and the ravages of the elements. Two new works were: the making of a small underground concrete tank, and the

making of a new jetty to replace the old one, which had been in existence seventeen years and had now become unsafe. For the communal effort there are about sixteen acres under cultivation. All the crops raised are for local consumption, there being no market for any produce available for us.

2nd. *Individual.* Several of the younger people, husband and wife working together, now make quite a feature of gardening for themselves during the rainy months, when alone such is possible for them. Some of the produce thus raised they sell to the station, in order to purchase clothing and other desired objects.

As of recent years, several tons of sandal-wood were collected, bit by bit, and brought in for sale to the station. With the money thus obtained the individual buys food, clothing, &c.; and, the wood being sold from time to time at Thursday Island, the station funds benefit by any profits there may be. The same applies to bêche-de-mer fishing, which a number of men in company did a little at.

General Remarks.

The seasons were good: no destructive floods in the rainy season, but a good, well-distributed fall of rain, whilst an occasional shower of rain during the dry season kept the grass growing well all the year, and the stock in good condition.

The concrete dam put in the station creek the previous year stood us in good stead, giving us a plentiful supply of water all the year.

Much to our regret, from neither Church nor State were we honoured with a visit.

As this may be my last report of the work of this station, my last words shall be a declaration of humble and hearty thanks to Him Who has blessed us here through all the years of our service and has graciously permitted us to serve Him amongst this people.

EDWIN BROWN.

Weipa, February 25th, 1918.

SURINAM.

OUR MISSION DURING 1917.

By Bishop J. Taylor Hamilton, D.D.

The Situation in General.

IN this Dutch colony the influence of the war made itself felt to a greater degree last year than hitherto. Its communications with the outer world were very seriously affected, with all that this means for export and import trade. The British and French lines ceased to make Paramaribo

a regular port of call. The Royal Dutch West Indian Mail discontinued its service. Finally the colony became dependent on steamers coming from New York at irregular intervals, and on small coasting vessels which linked it with neighbouring lands. The importation of provisions became very uncertain and irregular, and the mails unreliable. Happily the fertility of the soil guarantees safety over against conditions of actual famine, provided normal weather is providentially granted and provided labour applies its energies. Indirectly, therefore, the laming of the means of transportation overseas may not have been wholly without its good results, if it has taught the colony to be more self dependent, and has spurred on its working men and women to open up the resources that are at hand. Repeatedly were efforts made by Governor Staal to stimulate owners of small tracts of land to produce the greatest possible quantity of maize and rice and root crops; and those who heeded his exhortations, or who could offer for sale bananas and cocoa-nuts and other products, found themselves well off. Planters on a larger scale made various experiences. The cocoa harvest was good, but this product brought lower prices than usual. Coffee was very abundant, but for a long time had no market. The sugar plantations suffered from lack of labourers. Para rubber seems to have suffered from a disease of the trees. On the other hand, the quantity of wild rubber gathered was very considerable.

For the Mission the interruption of the connection with Holland was most unfortunate, involving as it did the inability of our Society in Holland and auxiliary societies of friends to send financial aid, the absence of which must seriously affect the accounts of the Mission Province. As hitherto, since 1914, it continued to be impossible for missionaries to go on furlough and to send their children home for education. In view of the ever-increasing cost of the necessities of life, a small addition was made to the salaries of the native missionary workers who had been receiving the lowest compensation—in the individual instance a small enough aid in the struggle for existence, yet constituting a large enough burden for the Province, when many times multiplied. In order in some way to alleviate the want among the poorest classes in Paramaribo, during the school holidays the children of many of the poorest were sent to the country districts, through the efforts of a committee composed of mission workers, and with the aid of the mission business. The firm also provided dinner on certain days of the week for a certain number of children attending our schools in the city.

On May 25 the venerable Br. B. Heyde died, who many years ago had been in the service of the Mission, and who to the end showed an interest in it and in the people amongst whom his lot was cast; and on March 26th the aged assistant missionary Lucas Muringen passed away, after a service of more than forty years in various capacities.

Statistical Notes.

The statistical reports of the "Old Mission" show a membership of 27,873 at the close of the year 1917, a decrease of 465. The "New Mission," on the other hand, had, we believe, a net increase in membership, though the exact figures of the Mission in the Bushland have failed to reach us. The Mission among the Javanese in particular could rejoice in the baptism of converts as in no previous year, thirteen having been baptised at one time at Leliendaal; and the Mission among the British East Indians registered progress, in the completion of the new station at Alkmaar, on the Commewijne. Moreover, though the decrease in numbers in connection with the "Creole" Mission is to be deplored, in the inner life of the congregations the past year was a good year in certain respects. For example, the establishment of orderly family life through legal and ecclesiastical marriages was marked by an advance over previous years. The decline in the total membership is ascribed to the removal of names from the lists, especially in connection with the congregations of Rust en Vrede, Salem, the North Church in Paramaribo, and Sharon, on account of change of residence, or carelessness in regard to religious duties.

In general the movement to the city from the "districts" was less pronounced than usual: now and again people made the reverse move in order to live more cheaply.

Religious Life and the War.

It cannot be said that our membership as a whole has sought to learn the meaning of God's providential leadings in connection with the cares induced by the great struggle of our times. Especially among the young people in a number of districts religious life seems to pulsate very weakly, whilst on the other hand there is a strong tendency to cast off restraints. In the city costly amusements draw crowds. There seems to be a drift towards new religious organisations, in the hope, possibly, of escaping discipline. On the other hand, superstition and even idolatry have here and there raised their heads in a shameless way. And yet it would be ungrateful on our part were we to omit to mention that the Spirit of God has been effectively at work in the hearts of some. Now and again, from voluntary confidences and from testimonies given by the sick or dying, it is very evident that spiritual life is there.

One district which caused special anxiety was the region of the Para. In externals the Para people are well off. They acquired means by the sale of land to a "Bauxite Company," and by the sale of foodstuffs, for which there was a great demand. But these people seem unable to bear their prosperity. The congregation at Berlyn gave special cause for anxiety, and, whilst Br. Hiwat managed to remain among that people, his relationship to them became very trying. Along the line of railway the two villages Onverwacht and Assembo, which form

one congregation, lived in constant strife with one another, on account of boundary questions—a strife that threatened to disrupt the congregation of 453 souls.

Finance.

The balance on the accounts of the Province was somewhat unfavourable. Expenses caused by the war weighed heavily, and led to a deficit, which was increased by the school accounts; for the contributions usually received from Holland in furtherance of our schools were not forthcoming. The state of the finances causes grave concern.

City Mission Work.

It was unavoidable that the efficiency of the City Mission for the social uplift and economic benefit of unfortunate classes in the city, should have been affected by the fact that its manager, Br. Vogt, had of necessity to be placed in charge of the school work of the Mission, our Inspector of Schools, Br. Schuetz, finding it impossible, though a neutral, to return from furlough in Holland. Nevertheless, progress was made, especially in connection with the establishment for broom-making and the weaving of Panama hats. An institute was also founded for the care of orphans, during the period between their leaving the Homes provided for them and their finding employment that gives them support. The services rendered to the soldiers of the garrison are growing in significance.

The various hostels—for example, the Home for the candidates for service in the schools and the Home for apprentices—continue to do good work, and approve themselves more and more as avenues of missionary influence. But the problems connected with the cost of living and the securing of reliable help in connection with them, became very acute at times.

Educational Work.

No change was made in the number of our schools during 1917; but what had already begun to be observed became still more apparent, viz., the decrease in attendance at our city schools and the increase in attendance at the schools in the country districts. The explanation is a twofold one. On the one hand the State schools are growing more popular with some of our families, and on the other hand the school opened a few years ago by the African Methodist Episcopal Church has a special power of attraction for others—possibly because of the liberties allowed there. One consequence of the twofold tendency is that we have gradually been left with a superabundance of assistant teachers on our hands, whilst the old problem remains of securing a sufficient number of teachers with higher qualifications to take charge of the schools in the country districts. Owing to the absence of aid from Holland, the school accounts closed with a deficit of \$2,800 (£583).

As in 1916, five candidates pursued a preparatory course with Br. T. Müller, in order to fit themselves for the study of theology proper later on.

The Church Conference.

The Church Conference, which met on October 2nd, was composed of 28 *ex-officio* and 13 voting members, and five advisory members. The proportion according to races was 25 Europeans and 21 natives. The first day of the Conference week was devoted to the review of the educational work with our teachers, and in the evening a reception for the teachers was held in the garden at the rear of the Primary School. Other evenings were devoted to a survey of efforts in connection with evangelisation throughout the Province, to a "family evening," to a "Mission evening," and to a discussion of social problems. The gatherings sometimes took place in the large central church, sometimes in the gardens. On the last-mentioned evening Br. S. Beck spoke in the large church on the food problem of the colony, and Br. Vogt gave an address on the International Character of Christianity. On this occasion the attendance was especially large, and all classes of society were well represented. Amongst others, the Governor, attended by members of his staff, honoured the speakers with his presence. The week of Conferences was closed with a social gathering of missionary workers in one of the beautiful gardens of the Mission.

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The "New Mission."

During the year 1917 much that was of interest transpired in connection with the "New Mission." For the work among the Javanese contract labourers it marked a time of advance, fourteen adults and five children of former non-Christians being baptised, whereby the number of Javanese Christians has risen to 56. The more numerous the Christians become and the more they strengthen each other by holding together in Christian fellowship, the greater significance attaches to their being banded together. A helping hand of real value is thus held out to new converts, who must reckon with the hostility of their Mohammedan fellow-countrymen. The two Javanese evangelists approved themselves faithful, and the work in the Nickérie district showed the beneficial effect of an energetic and devoted leader of their own race being once more stationed in their midst.

The East Indian Mission.

For the East Indian Christians the great event of the year was the opening of the new station at Alkmaar, on the Commewijne, a centre which includes a small orphanage for East Indian children. This advance was made possible in part by the employment of means set free some years ago by the sale of Chini, in the Himalayan Field, and in part through generous gifts received from friends of the Mission in Denmark. Here Br. Legêne, a Dane by birth, is stationed. From Alkmaar, East Indians, contract labourers and families settled on small tracts

of land received from the Colonial Government at the expiration of the contract period, can be reached in very large numbers, for thousands of them live and labour along the Commewijne. Br. Legêne's field reaches to the Cottica and the Upper Commewijne. For the development of this field the stationing of Sriman, probably our most experienced East Indian evangelist, at Kroonenburg, on the opposite bank of the river, is of great importance.


Unfortunately the East Indian work in Paramaribo experienced something of a setback. But one of its outposts, that at Groningen, on the Saramacca, was developed by the erection of a home for the native evangelist, Hemraj, on land acquired from the Government near the station of the Creole Mission. In the Nickérie district the East Indian Christians built a small meeting-house on their own initiative. If somewhat primitive, it answers all present needs. So that, while this division of the work cannot report marked progress, it has not been a time of standstill. Five adults and the child of one of these, were baptised—and this in the face of the keen opposition of the Brahmins and at times also of the Roman Catholic priests.

The Bushland Mission.

In the Bush-Negro congregations ten adults and one child were baptised as converts from heathendom, besides additions through the normal growth of congregations. A number of years ago Kwakoepron was established as the centre for evangelisation amongst the tribes of the Upper Saramacca. It seemed to be strategically situated, lying as it does where the railway touches that river. But the spot proved very unhealthy. And there have been shiftings of population among the Matuaris and others, movements characteristic of these tribes. All this led the Provincial Board to decide on a transfer of the centre of influence farther up the river. A new house was built for the evangelist in charge of the upper reaches at Kwattahede. A debt still rests on this, as also on the building at Groningen. On the Upper Surinam River a new church was built at New Aurora, under the supervision of our energetic ordained leader of the Upper Surinam work, Br. Marius Schelts, of Ganzee. This church at New Aurora marks a real advance, especially as its cost has been practically covered by money raised by the local congregation.

Review.

Our esteemed Superintendent, Bishop Voullaire, closes his review of the year 1917 in Surinam with these words:—"Toil, labour, many unpleasant experiences, and but little success—these things characterised the year 1917. But the Lord has permitted us to work on, and has ever and again given us proofs that He has not forgotten us. With this last fact in view we humble ourselves before Him with hearts full of gratitude."



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ALASKA.

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT, BETHEL, JUNE 1st— DECEMBER 31st, 1917.

Changes in the Staff.

IN the months under review several changes in the *personnel* of the Mission were made. In view of Br. and Sr. Holtmeier's return to the States, some arrangement had to be made to man the mill in their absence. Locally it was therefore arranged that Br. and Sr. Schwalbe be stationed at Bethel, where he could attend to both boats and saw-mill and in the winter have the general management of the station. It became apparent to us that under this arrangement it would be unnecessary to have an extra man for the mill. Furthermore there was the doubt of the health of Br. and Sr. Holtmeier ever being such as to enable them to endure the rigours of this cold, damp climate. For some time past it had been a matter of grave concern for them. Such being the apparent facts, it was deemed wise that they should retire from the service of the Alaska Mission and seek the Lord's leading elsewhere.

With the first steamer there came to us Br. and Sr. A. B. Scheel. It was *a* Scheel, but not the one we had been long expecting. Their coming was a surprise to us. (We did, however, hear of their coming, by wire, before their actual arrival). Br. Scheel had been assigned to the Bethel saw-mill tentatively, the final decision being left to the local Conference. As we had arranged otherwise, and as Br. and Sr. Schwalbe had already moved from Quinhagak to Bethel, it was decided to send Br. and Sr. Scheel to help Br. Stecker at Quinhagak, hoping that Br. Scheel might get an insight into the Mission trade operations there and eventually be able to take charge of that phase of our work at that station. As you will note from the Quinhagak report, that could not be done this year. No teacher was forthcoming to fill the vacancy caused by the marriage of Miss Marie Stecker to Br. Drebert. Consequently Br. and Sr. Scheel have taken charge of the U.S. Government school at that station. Workers coming to this field of the Church's activity need to be of a willing disposition and a cheerful heart. Conditions change, workers have to be shifted; but eventually every enthusiastic and whole-hearted worker will without doubt find his or her special niche, so that, when the time comes that conditions of age, or health, or

circumstance demand the return to the "outside," they find it rather sad to separate themselves from the work, the fellow-workers, the people and the country they have learned to love.

Prosperous Times.

The native people far from the scenes of battle and bloodshed have had a pleasant and prosperous summer. Health has been fair, and food enough. For several weeks during the summer the river was extraordinarily high, doing considerable damage farther up in the way of destroying fish-wheels and dragging off the nets of the uncautious. Here at Bethel the water was level with the top of our wharf, so that when the scow loaded with wood tied up to the wharf we looked up to the load instead of down upon it. For the unloaders certainly a cheering sight! This same flood brought much timber down from the upper reaches of the river. It was an interesting sight to see the people, natives and others, tying their ropes to whatever log seemed solid and then towing it in to the nearest shore, later to collect the logs so gathered into a raft. We, too, enjoyed this benefit of the flood, in so far as we had no difficulty at all in procuring our firewood. The natives at and near Bethel were just about finished with the main run of fish when the water rose, but to the up-river people it occasioned a distinct loss and hardship. It not only took their fish-wheels and nets, but made fishing impossible just at the time the fish were passing them. However, we have heard of no serious want on account of it. In this country there is such a varied fish harvest that, if one fails, there is still hope that the next will make up the loss of the first. For instance, here at Bethel dog food was becoming very scarce. During a recent mild spell one of the native men, while out hunting, came upon an open spot on a near-by creek. An open, sluggish stream at this time of the year indicates black fish. In mild spells these fish gather in tremendously large schools in a small compass, and actually melt the thickest ice. The ice this winter is probably about four feet thick. The Bethel natives out of the above discovery harvested several tons of black fish.

Surely the native people had abundant reason for thankfulness: the natural resources fair, and the opportunity for earning a continuous one. With the increasing white population there is more demand for native labour. It used to be so that the man running the saw-mill would of a morning find twice the number necessary for a crew waiting; now, especially toward the close of the season, he can hardly complete a working crew.

Industrial Mission Work.

In running the mill Br. Schwalbe met no insuperable difficulties. He was fortunate to have a kind and helpful neighbour, a mechanic experienced in steam engineering and in saw-milling, whom on occasion he could consult. The saw-mill had a short but successful season. Besides this and the other routine work

about the place we had a cabin built for an invalid widow, Mrs. Roemer, whose husband, a white man, died a few years ago. They had a cabin about six miles from Bethel, but that was too far for her son to come to school, nor could we hope at that distance properly to look after them.

We also started a cabin for the use of the reindeer herders when they come for supplies. We were not able to finish this, but even in its unfinished condition it has been forced into use by a family that had no other place to go to.

Temporal work during the summer has really been "too numerous" to be drawn out into a report. Br. and Sr. Holtmeier spent several weeks at Quigillingok, superintending the building of the chapel there. Br. Schwalbe, with his good-natured crew, was busy delivering the wood, lumber and freight to the other stations. Some of us stayed at home. We were all busy. There were no "slackers!"

School and Church Work.

The Government has two enthusiastic teachers at Bethel. The attendance averages about forty. The teachers co-operated cheerfully with Br. and Sr. Schwalbe in preparing the Christmas programme, which was given before a completely filled church. On the following evening another treat was in store for the children when, at a community celebration, each boy, girl and babe received candy, a toy, and some useful article. The money for this was donated by the white population of the town.

The services have been conducted as usual, and the average attendance has been good. Considering that the attractions which might keep the people away are increasing, we have reason for encouragement in that we are so well holding our own. At most of the evening services we have enjoyed special music. The teachers were ever ready to help, and also several of the miners helped in the choir or sang solos. A fair proportion of the miners had been coming to our Sunday evening services this winter. Naturally we are glad to have our fellow-people with us. It heartens us, and we believe that by the grace and power of the gospel they will also receive inspiration for the noblest and best.

Proposed new Boarding School.

That our work is held in high esteem by most of them is being made very plain to us now. For some years past we have been entertaining the hope that we might some day open a Boarding School of larger proportions than attempted heretofore on the Lower Kuskokwim. There are orphans whose lot is a miserable one who would find a centre of refuge there; there are children of herders and the more ambitious natives who would be glad to send their children to an efficient, practical, and character-building school. White men who have married in this country have spoken to us, hoping that we might be persuaded to open such a school. But where were the means? There were none.

We must wait. The time would come, we believed. It has come. Last summer a "strike" was made in the Good News Bay Mining District. The extent of the gold is not great, but there seems to be an abundance as far as it goes. We made bold to lay our aims and purposes before several of the men, and they startled us with their enthusiasm and liberality. As far as we have approached the men of the country we have met with the kindest response. We will not make any definite statement now, but we believe that the day is dawning in which our hopes for a well-planned and well-furnished Boarding School is to be realised. We are well aware that the uncertainties of the war make new undertakings especially difficult; but the response we are receiving makes us optimistic enough to believe that it will be done, and, when completed, that it can be supported and maintained by the financial aid we will receive in the Kuskokwim Valley.

Missionary Tours.

Owing to conditions of health and other circumstances, not as many missionary visitation trips have been made as we should make and would wish to make. The natives know that we come as often as we can, and so are always patiently eager for our visits. Our evangelist, Br. Robert Egsak, however, has been able to make several trips. He remains an earnest and tactful worker. Among the tundra people he is welcomed more heartily than any other messenger of the gospel. We look forward to a spiritual awakening among them. They are realising that there is a greater light than theirs and a more joy-filled religion than theirs. If we had more men of Br. Egsak's type, greater good could be accomplished at less cost.

May it come to pass as we have reason to believe it will that there be a brother who will be able to devote most of his time to the training of native helpers and evangelists, and through them begin to develop the idea of a self-supporting Native Church.

ARTHUR F. BUTZIN.

EXTRACTS FROM THE SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
OF QUIGILLINGOK, JUNE TO DECEMBER, 1917.

The semi-annual report of the mission work at Quigillingok, Alaska, has been received from Br. and Sr. Drebert. Its length makes it impossible to reprint the whole, but the main features upon which it dwells are chronicled as briefly as possible in the following paragraphs:—

Progress.

The last year has shown marked progress in the little village of Quigillingok. A nice, roomy church-building has taken the place of the temporary and small meeting-room in the mission-house. Five new houses have been erected, and a number of others have been much improved.

In the heart and home of the missionary, of course, the presence of Sr. Drebert, who has come to share his toils and anxieties, marks the beginning of a new era of happy missionary labour.

When Br. and Sr. Drebert returned to Quigillingok early in July, Br. Holtmeier and family accompanied them. Although they could only remain for seventeen days, all working together with the help of three natives, we could get the church-building well under way. Later, Br. Sam. Stecker came, and remained to assist in the temporal work and in teaching during the winter.

The auditorium in the new church will seat from 250 to 300 people. It is furnished in a very simple style—benches without backs, which we have made convertible into school-desks and forms, and a home-made table serves as the pulpit.

An effort was made to complete the building by the 12th of August, and plans for its dedication were made accordingly. The church was not completed, however, and, as many of the natives had not come back from the fishing camps, this event had to be postponed until October. The 12th of August proved to be a great day, nevertheless. "On the morning of the 12th, the good boat *Moravian* and the scow hove in sight, and reached Quigillingok at 9 o'clock. But who might be along? As they drew near we recognised Br. Kilbuck, then Sr. Drebert's father (Br. Stecker) and her sister Anna. With the latter were Sr. Schwalbe and her little daughter, and Br. Schwalbe in the pilot-house. Such a lot of company! It made us very happy! When all had come ashore, we were led down into the cabin of the *Moravian*, where a real surprise awaited us. There, under a blanket, was Sr. Drebert's brother Samuel, just arrived from Seattle. This was a day never to be forgotten! When they left on Monday it all seemed like a dream to us. Since then only one white man, a fisherman, has visited us in Quigillingok."

When the church-building was finally completed, the services of dedication were performed by Br. Drebert alone on October 21st. It proved to be a great day for the people.

Other important improvements at the station are the building of a small warehouse for groceries, nets, &c., the conversion of the meeting-room in the mission-house into two comfortable living-rooms for the larger mission family, and a water-tank for storing rain-water in summer. There is no good water supply, and the people have to depend upon rain-water in summer and melted snow in winter for their domestic supply. In addition to these things, also, the station now has its own gasoline boat. This has been made possible by equipping the sail-boat with a second-hand engine. Now the missionary finds it possible to use sail, gasoline power, or both. On a recent trip from Bethel it proved capable of hauling four tons of freight.

At Bethel we took up our vegetables from our garden to take with us. Potatoes and cabbages were fairly good, cauliflower very good, but it had evidently been a poor year for carrots and beets. The latter were very small, but had large tops.

Educational Notes.

We are keeping school again under very much the same conditions as last year, except that we have four times as much room to do it in. We started to teach on November 1st. The first two days we did not get much more done than to clean the children's heads and to cut the hair of those who needed it. Each one was given a half-piece of soap to take home for their own use. The attendance on the first day was 35, the next day 40, and this has been about the average during the two months. Once there were 57 present. There is no compulsory attendance. They all come of their own free will. Surely, they deserve to have a well-equipped school with at least one or, if possible, two regular teachers. The first half-hour of each day we use for singing and similar exercises. At these times Sr. Drebert plays the organ for us. She also has a sewing class for the older girls every Friday afternoon. Twice the girls have scrubbed the church floor and all the benches. The older boys also come for industrial work on Friday afternoons, when they saw and split wood for church and school. Twice a week we have evening school for the young people and older school children. In addition to teaching them English, it is our aim to teach them to read and write in Eskimo, so that they may be able to read the hymns and Scripture passages and to write letters for the benefit of their parents and older friends.

Economic Conditions.

In spite of high prices, the people were better off this year than last. Foxes and cod-fish were plentiful. Enough fish were secured to last through the winter, both for people and dogs. The supply of seal-oil was scarce, as the seal were not plentiful in the spring. Belugas (a cetacean of the dolphin family, ten feet long, and white when adult, sometimes called the white whale), too, were few—a disappointment to the missionary, who had had a net made especially for the purpose of catching them. As a consolation, however, Br. Drebert adds, "Since foxes are so plentiful, we are not sorry that they did not get any belugas, for, if they (the natives) have too much meat and oil, many of them will lie at home all winter doing nothing; which, of course, is not conducive to either health or godliness. There are, however, some really poor people living here—eighteen widows, some of them with a number of children with no one to take care of them.

!Church Services.

On Thanksgiving Day, as usual, we had two services—the sermon and collection in the morning, and the Lovefeast in the afternoon. This latter gave us the opportunity of using our new (tin) Lovefeast cups for the first time. As there are only 100 of them, some of the people had to wait until others were served. Helper Dick spoke at this service. The morning collection amounted to \$17.00 (£3 10s. 10d.). This is an improvement on

last year's Thanksgiving collection, but does not show much sacrifice on the part of so many people. The Christian way of giving does not appeal to them. If each one could display his gift high above the heads of the congregation, we would have realised much more. (This trait is not peculiar to either Alaska or the Eskimo.—The Editor.)

Again we had a real tree for our Christmas celebration. Helper Dick brought it with our first winter mail from Bethel. On Christmas Day we had the sermon in the morning and the children's exercise at 4 p.m., as it was dark at that time. For the first time the more advanced children had recitations, and they did very well. The singing, too, was very good. Two new Christmas songs had been learned, and a number of the older scholars sang "Morning Star." We felt fortunate in having a white man for a visitor at the Christmas entertainment, a fisherman living 40 miles from here.

Medical Work, and Native Assistance.

Far from the other stations Br. and Sr. Drebert find that all the sick people along that part of the coast depend upon them for medical attendance. He writes, "Whenever we can, we go to see the patients. Sr. Drebert accompanies me on most of these visits, because when I am not at home she will be depended upon for any medical help which these people need. Our faithful helper, Noah Kongak, has been sick with consumption all summer, and has not been able to walk for two months. We miss his help. His faith has remained steadfast, and he is not afraid of death.

"Samuel, a young man, has kept services all summer for the people at the fish camps, and now during the winter he has gone to the neighbouring villages several times to preach the Word of God. He has done all this of his own accord and without pay. He is a bright and earnest young man, has won the esteem of the missionaries and the respect of the people. Some day we hope to have him for our helper."

—From *The Moravian*.

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NICARAGUA.

REPORT OF THE MISSION FOR 1917.

By Bishop J. Taylor Hamilton, D.D.

The Superintendent on Tour.

THE Provincial Board was able to do its work undisturbed throughout the whole year, and communications with Bethlehem (U.S.A.) could be maintained regularly. The Superintendent, Br. Grossmann, paid three extensive visits to various stations: from January 31st to February

28th to Twappi, Yulu, Wounta Haalover, and Prinzapulka; from May 3rd to 30th to Yulu, Tasbapauni, and Pearl Lagoon; and from November 19th to December 19th to Karawala, Kru, Little Sandy Bay, Rio Grande and Pearl Lagoon. In connection with the second visit he conducted a very important Conference of native workers at Yulu from May 13th to 20th, the first of the kind held in this field. Fifty-six men participated—missionaries, lay preachers, Sunday-school teachers, schoolmasters, and "helpers"—all the stations being represented except Pearl Lagoon and Sangsangtá.

Reinforcements.

The missionary force was increased by the arrival of Br. and Sr. David Haglund on September 27th, Br. Haglund having been ordained by Bishop Moench at Nazareth, Pa., on the 9th of the month, and by the arrival of the wives of Br. Schramm and Br. Bishop, the former couple having been united in marriage at Bethlehem, Pa., on April 11th, and the latter at Winston-Salem, N.C., on June 26th. Br. and Sr. Haglund were stationed at Old Bank, and Br. and Sr. Schramm at Karawala, where they took the place of Br. Lewis and wife, who retired in September, the Bishops following the Schramms at Wasla. On the whole the health of the missionaries was a cause for great thankfulness. Sr. Zollhoefer, who has moved to Bluefields and assists in the work among the women there, had to undergo an operation, however, and Br. Wilson had two serious attacks of malaria.

Lay Workers.

Without the hearty co-operation of lay workers it would have been impossible to carry on the extensive missionary undertakings in Nicaragua. And even with this aid the present situation entails a severe strain on every missionary and on those who are responsible for the oversight of the field. Br. Fisher had charge of three full stations, and Dakura was added to the already heavy burden of Br. Danneberger; nor was it possible to find an assistant for Br. Heath on the Upper Wangks. In 1909, 5,795 members were in the care of thirteen foreign couples and five native ministers at fifteen stations. At the close of the year under review only ten stations had resident ministers, eight being foreign and four native, and the membership had grown to 7,107. In 1909 our Day-schools had not yet been re-opened. At the end of 1917, 1,195 scholars were in attendance. The Sunday-schools had 1,764 children under instruction in 1909; now they have 3,102. The following licensed lay preachers were at work at the close of last year and in receipt of some compensation—in the case of all but one generously contributed by friends in the United States: Peter Watson, at Tasbapauni; Joseph Rigby, at Karawala; S. E. Ramsay, at Ebenezer; Joseph Jiminez, at Wasakin; Theophilus Jotham, at Tuberus; Henry Vaughan, at Twappi; William Lockwood, at Krutá; and William Allen,

at Bilwaskarma. The following lay preachers have been licensed and serve without compensation : George Nash, at Cotton Tree, on the Bluefields River : Henry Sinclair, at Mahogany Creek ; Henry Fisher, at Marshall Point, near Pearl Lagoon ; and Joe Downs, at Brown Bank, near Pearl Lagoon. The members of the "Preachers' Class" at Bluefields continue to render very valuable aid at Rama Key and in the town itself and in its vicinity—also without compensation. They are George Hodgson, Harry Coe, Peter Hooker, Obadiah Hall, and Joe Harrison. And in some of the Indian outposts the "helpers" stately conduct services and are in charge of the Sunday-school. There is great reason to thank God for all this co-operation, though at some places there is still lack of leaders who can read. This is especially true of villages along the Wangks that were wholly heathen till within the last decade. Twelve teachers in addition to the missionaries themselves were employed in the Day-schools at various places.

Evangelistic Efforts.

In addition to the evangelistic tours made, with more or less frequency, up the rivers of the country, special mention may be made of a visit paid by the Brn. Taylor and Danneberger to the villages in Honduras which were visited some years ago by the Brn. Theodore Reinke and Fisher. This latter visit was still held in cherished remembrance and ensured a cordial welcome.

Economic and Financial Conditions.

Economically it was in many respects a trying year. The great hurricane which swept destructively over Grand Cayman, Cuba and Jamaica was felt along the upper part of the coast and destroyed some plantations. Floods ruined plantations on the low-lands of the Wawa, Wounta, and Prinzapulka districts. A terrific thunderstorm burst over Bluefields on September 19th, and lightning struck the steeple of our central church, but without causing a fire. On November 10th a disastrous fire broke out in the business section of the town, and for a time our main mission property was in danger ; but, as so frequently before, God graciously turned the flames aside and delivered the Mission in a most wonderful way.

Financially, the people as a whole have not been well off, and money was the reverse of abundant, whilst the importation of flour, &c, became increasingly scanty. A certain firm on the coast had to discharge Indian labourers, and in this manner members of Indian congregations lost employment. But the gold mines drew labour not only from these congregations but also from Bluefields, and various mahogany camps and banana plantations needed men. The tendency is, moreover, to induce the men to remain when they have gained experience, as is quite natural. This is, however, morally detrimental, as they have left their families in the home village. Plans are being made to care for their religious wants as far as can be done. But this is

no easy matter with the means of transportation as they are. It goes without saying that the environment of our people at many, if not most, of these places of employment is decidedly harmful.

Progress.

Notwithstanding the adverse times, there has been some reaching out of influence. Tuberus, on the Wawa River, was supplied with a resident evangelist, Theophilus Jotham, of Yulu. The village is growing, quite a number of houses having been built and Sumus of the Waspuk region having removed thither for the sake of the Gospel. The evangelist has taught the people how to saw timber, and preparations were being made to erect a chapel. The Kruta region, in Honduras, has received an evangelist in the person of William Lockwood, of Karata, who has opened a Day-school and also conducts Sunday-school there. The "helper," William Allen, has been stationed at the neighbouring village of Bilwaskarma, where a meeting house was built

Building Operations.

Nor has the year been without building operations. At Karawala the mission-house was re-built, the old house having become dilapidated. Places of worship were built at Marshall Point, near Pearl Lagoon, and at Suhi, near Sangsangtá, and these were dedicated on May 25th and July 1st respectively. At Wounta Haulover, Sisin, and Tasbapauni the people have commenced to collect for the reconstruction of their churches. In Prinzapulka a vestry was added, where the missionary may also lodge when he makes his periodic visits. At the New Port, Cabo Gracias, a room was also secured for a similar purpose.

Retrogression and Growth.

On the other hand retrogression has to be chronicled in one instance, viz., at Kru—or La Cruz, as the place is now called—up the Rio Grande. All the Indians have removed from this place to a point thirty miles farther up the river, since all the land has been taken for banana plantations. In order to reach the Sumus and Miskitos whom we formerly served at La Cruz, it will be necessary later on to place an evangelist at their new centre. Over against this it is the more satisfactory to note that Ebenezer, Wasakin, Prinzapulka, Kiha, Tuberus, the New Port (Cabo Gracias), Bilwaskarma, and Suhi are growing in importance. Our indefatigable missionaries have every right to our prayerful sympathy and steady support, and should be reinforced as soon as possible. The middle coast and Wangks districts in particular are far too thinly manned. And the region of the gold mines clamours for gospel messengers for the sake of the whites as well as of the labouring people. The Foreign Ladies' Bible Class (English) has been maintained in town, and, wherever opportunity has offered, the endeavour has been made to serve the Spanish-speaking population with the Word of God as in former years.

In Bluefields and up the rivers and along the coast tracts have been distributed, with the aid of the Young Men's Union, among the quite large number of Chinese traders, in lieu of the ability to speak to them in their own language; and not infrequently they may be seen reading this Christian literature. At death-beds and funerals the missionaries have also tried to bring these people into touch with the way of salvation.

Roman Catholic and other Propaganda.

That we have to reckon with the aggressive work of the Roman Catholic propaganda becomes increasingly plain. Certain sects and "isms" are also insistent in their attempts to get a hold upon the people. And the influence of the so-called "Spirit-people" has by no means come to an end among the Indians of the upper coast.

Literary Efforts.

Notwithstanding the demands made upon his time in the extensive district of the Upper Wanks River, Br. G. R. Heath has found it possible to devote attention to literary work. His new primer for the schools, in Miskito and Spanish, is at present being printed in the United States, Br. W. H. Fluck kindly giving attention to the reading of the proof. A Miskito Catechism for use in connection with the instruction of candidates for baptism has been prepared by Br. Grossmann.

Medical Work.

The medical services rendered by our missionaries in regions devoid of qualified practitioners continue to be so great that the public almost appears to think that every Moravian missionary must be *ipso facto* a medical man. It is indeed a blessing that a number of the Brethren have received a degree of medical training, and that quite a number of missionaries' wives had experience as fully qualified nurses before leaving the homeland. What they do is a boon to the people of Nicaragua of all classes and races.

Statistics.


During the year 1917, 81 heathen were baptised and 198 persons added to the membership by confirmation. 105 marriages were celebrated. At the end of the year there were 262 candidates for baptism and "new people." There was a net gain in the membership of 150, bringing it up to a total of 7,107, of whom 153 were under discipline, this last being a smaller number than in 1913 and 1914, but slightly larger than in 1915 and 1916. Only three congregations failed to report a net gain in membership, the increase being quite generally distributed. Bluefields and Rama Key together number 1,615, over against 1,564 at the end of the previous year.

Finance.

The total cost of the Mission was \$17,267 (£3,597), an increase of about \$900 (£187) as compared with the previous year, but about \$800 (£166) less than in the year 1913, and more than \$3,000 (£625) less than in the year 1910. The receipts within the Province itself were \$2,583 (£538) in spite of the hard times, a higher sum than in any of the past eight years.

BLAZING A TRAIL.

By MRS. L. TAYLOR, of *Cape Gracias a Dios, Nicaragua.*

“ DIÓS, señora, hasta la vista.” “So long, Sky Pilot.”
 “Goodbye.” “Aisabe Parsin.” No wonder we began to feel somewhat like “Tommies” entraining for the front, with this babel of farewells ringing in our ears, as, saddled and booted and spurred, we swung our horses’ heads round till they faced the flaming tropical sunset, and waved our adieus to the little group of Spaniards, Americans, English and Indians who had accompanied us and the motor-boat which had brought us the first lap of our journey. Behind us lay the northern mouth of the broad river Wangks, in an unwonted languorous mood that sunny April afternoon, and before us stretched miles and miles of firm golden beach, with the blue waters of the bay breaking in gentle murmurs on our right, while on our left alternated the dense foliage of mangrove bushes and the exquisitely poised stateliness of cocoanut palms, whose wonderful balance and grace has to satisfy us for the lack of architectural beauty in a land of wooden structures, unrelieved by the occasional dome or spire for sight of which we exiles long inexpressibly at times.

On and on we rode, till the surf turned pink in the rosy light of the setting sun, and the vivid tropical colourings stood out in all their true value as old Sol smiled his “Goodnight” and blinked at us behind the fringe of palms. Then, in the coolness which followed with the afterglow, we urged on our horses, in order to make the best of the brief twilight which still remained to us, e’er darkness and silence enveloped us and left us with nought to guide but the light of the burning stars overhead and the steely hue of the water at our feet. It was but half-past seven when we reined in our horses at our first resting place,

but so still was the night that I felt it incumbent upon me to apologise to my hostess for arriving at such an inopportune hour. Fortunately, travellers in these isolated parts are so rare that no such apology was really necessary, and after a little rest and refreshment we again mounted our horses, and pushed on to the next ranch, for in the dry season, when the sun's rays are so fierce, night is the best time for travelling in these regions, particularly when one has a wee mite of three pillioned on one's saddle. By nine p.m. we were sleeping the untroubled sleep of the physically exhausted, but early next morning found us again in the saddle, fast eating up the miles that still lay between us and our destination, Kruta, a little village which enjoys the proud distinction of being the last place in Nicaragua, and consists of one church, one lighthouse, a native catechist's house, and a few bamboo dwellings huddled together in the heterogeneous fashion beloved of a people innocent of any ideas as to town planning. An enterprising "real estate" agent would weep at the thought of such neglected opportunities, for the place would make an ideal spot for a fashionable seaside resort. The lighthouse is built on a small peninsula, and the waves make orchestral music on both sides. Surely no one but a native race could have had the audacity to build their houses at right angles instead of parallel to all this loveliness; but the sea, to them, is as much an everyday occurrence as the sun itself. Hence, perhaps, their utter indifference to a "sea front" for their town. We were welcomed with expressions of joy at the sight of my husband, who is of course a fairly frequent visitor, and almost with incredulity when they saw me and "the little white one," as they affectionately termed our baby girl, and we were soon assigned quarters in a native hut—the very best the village afforded, although, it goes without saying, it lacked some of the necessary qualifications for a seaside hotel. In fact it was something of a cross between an aeroplane and a skyscraper, for it was suspended like Mohammed's coffin somewhere between earth and heaven, on slender rough-hewn poles, and approached by a series of rickety steps of the kind which one generally associates with an amateur fowlhouse. One had to take lessons in the art of ascending to one's dwelling gracefully, and the descent was even more perilous; indeed, one was obliged to negotiate those steps empty-handed, and, since the kitchen was beneath the house, the preparation of meals had moments of excitement, as the coffee and sugar and other edibles had to be handed from above by someone for whom the yawning chasm beneath had no terrors. The floor of the house was boarded (a luxury in a village where even the native catechist's house is floored with bamboo which requires the skill of a Blondin to traverse without mishap), but the boards are laid so far apart that when a strong "norther" blows one solves the problem of crinoline skirts without the aid of a hoop, and the atmosphere inside that hut may be described as "breezy," to say the least of it. Moreover, the kitchen was innocent of a chimney, and not merely the savoury odours of the

dinner-to-be but dense fumes of wood smoke found their way through the interstices, unwelcome heralds of a meal in progress. The cracks in the floor also complicated one's toilet operations, for the natives were so anxious not to lose a moment of our visit that they arose betimes, which in Nicaragua means somewhere around four a.m., and dispensing with any idea of regular calling hours would come knocking at the door of our combined bed-sitting-room long before I was awake, and I had to hustle through my dressing behind the shelter of a mosquito net, in my haste dropping the soap and a few hairpins, which would glide through my fingers and slip down the cracks on to the heads of the astonished natives assembled in the kitchen beneath to watch the preparation of the "white folks'" breakfast.

At the earliest possible moment I would begin to hold a levee, and all sorts and conditions of people would crowd into the little room, squatting on their haunches, and gazing with undisguised admiration and wonder at the transformation we had effected by the aid of a small boat-load of comforts in the shape of folding chairs, cots, &c., which was all we had allowed ourselves with which to face a fortnight of life with a primitive people. How they plied us with questions, ranging from detailed particulars of our ancestry from the year 1 to eager queries as to when the "nations would again have one heart" (peace); and when at length their curiosity was satisfied, and they knew more about me and mine than I felt I really honestly knew myself, they would sit silently watching my every action, and covertly nudging and remarking to one another whenever something unusual appealed to them.

Of course, there were long talks with those who were already Christians, and still longer talks with others who would fain tread the narrow way, but who had not yet been able to bring themselves to the sacrifice of much they would have to give up, if they made their stand for their Saviour; but throughout all these conversations there seemed to be a genuine search for the Gospel truth they had but glimpsed as yet. When one came to talk with the real heathen one's heart ached at the depth of their ignorance, and one realised how utterly futile was one brief fortnight to bring these wanderers safely within the fold. There was one particularly pathetic old lady, who for many months had sought admission to the Church, but whose partner had turned a deaf ear to all her entreaties that he would go through the form of civil and church marriage with her. At length, however, the exhortations of our native catechist and the woman's importunity prevailed, and whilst we were in Kruta the old lady talked and thought of nothing but how she could get ready for the marriage service and the subsequent confirmation of her husband and herself. There were great difficulties to encounter in the way of raising sufficient money to pay the civil marriage fee charged by the Government, and when this had been overcome she spent long hours in earnest consultation with me regarding the provision of a suitable dress. I really began to

be afraid she was so obsessed by the outward forms and symbols that perhaps she did not thoroughly understand the solemnity of the vows she was taking; but when finally the confirmation took place, and my husband's hand was placed upon her head in benediction, the old lady covered her face with her hands and her whole frame shook with sobs, not the hysterical wail to which the heathen give vent in moments of emotion, but evidently the outcome of the reaction, after months of suspense and uncertainty as to whether she would ever prevail upon her husband to comply with the Church's requirements.

Whenever it was announced that services would be held, the little church was crowded to its utmost capacity, and again one longed to bring the scene before the folks at home. Here one comes face to face with religion stripped of all its ritual. The worshippers gather together in a tiny bamboo structure, called by courtesy a church, but with nothing but its emptiness of furniture to distinguish it from any other dwelling. A roughly made table stands at one end, and a somewhat insecure three-legged stool upon which the minister is supposed to maintain his equilibrium. All around the building a ten-inch unplanned board provides a bench where the men and older Christian women sit, but the children, and even grey-haired old women who have not yet become members, sit or kneel on the bare wooden floor, often with the sun's rays streaming directly on to their wrinkled old faces. Sometimes they are so worn and weary and—yes, I will say it—so uncomfortable, that they just fall asleep as they sit; and yet they come, because they love to hear the Gospel, and they drink in the words of the preacher as though their very life depended upon what he was saying. From the surrounding villages also they flock to hear him, tramping weary miles in the blinding glare of the sun, and never tasting food till sundown, when they reach their homes once more. And what of their lives in the remote villages from which they come? On one occasion, at their earnest invitation, we visited some of the people in one of these outlying preaching-places. Situated on the right bank of the Kruta River, which divides Nicaragua from Honduras, Walpa Tara, as the place is called, is a fairly large and well-populated village. It was the first time a white woman and child had visited them, and the people were all *en fête* to welcome us on our arrival. We held service in the largest house in Walpa Tara, and it was barely big enough to hold the crowds who eagerly flocked to hear the message. During the service I noticed a mother with a little naked child in her arms which was suffering from bronchitis and the hernia which so often accompanies this disease amongst ignorant peoples. I sought her out after the meeting and explained as simply as possible how she could remedy the trouble, but was scarcely prepared for the sequel to what I had merely regarded as an act of common human kindness from one mother to another. Word went round that I must be a doctor, and immediately I was surrounded by a pitiful group of eager

mothers with sick, wan children, and found myself prescribing in a manner which surprised me. But their ignorance was so pathetic—it needed no M.D. after one's name to enable one to see at a glance that one child only needed some camphorated vaseline and a button on the back of the frock that was open to all the winds that blow—just a little common-sense would save many a life; but, alas! there is no one to exercise it. Our progress to the river-side was retarded over and over again by other villagers who begged for “just a little medicine,” and we had to tear ourselves away, leaving hope and comfort in some hearts, we trust, but with the sad consciousness that a lifetime's work was not enough to free these people from the degradation which seemed to clutch at us as we passed.

Before being allowed to leave, however, we were conducted in solemn and dignified state to the house of the head-man of the village—one of our most earnest Christian workers and a member of the church at Kruta. He was just completing the erection of a new house, which was still partially open to the public gaze, although screened somewhat by a thick growth of banana and mimosa trees, which formed a kind of open-air conservatory on two sides. Here our host dispensed fried chicken and coffee, to the strains of “Everybody's doing it,” played on his Victrola; and as I ate and listened the thought came home to me that the trader has stolen a march upon us out here in the long grass in Nicaragua. It used to be that “trade followed the missionary,” but now, alas! the trader is getting ahead of us, and giving to the Moskito man a veneer of civilisation while yet he knows not the God of the Christians. Oh, it is easy to shrug our shoulders and say that a gramophone can play Sankey records as well as the vacuous ragtime of third-rate music-hall comedians; but who is to teach the Moskito lad to discriminate between the two? He returns to his heathen village from the mahogany camps with money in his pocket and enough English to purchase a gramophone and understand the ribald jests which it screeches at him through the idle hours of an evening spent in what he calls his home. But who is to give him the fond associations which will teach him to choose rather the appealing tones of Gipsy Smith's rendering of “Saved by grace”? Not his mother, whose stories and queries I could only repeat to a ladies' meeting with bated breath and averted eyes. Our Sunday-schools of the southern coast have so stored their scholars' minds with beautiful hymns that they gather delightedly round a gramophone to listen to the familiar Sankey tunes to which they will quite contentedly hum their own translation of the words; but for the Walpa Tara boys there is no Sunday-school. People of the Home Churches! do you realise that the uncensored records of the trader are giving to the Moskito young man a very strange idea of life as it is lived by the “Inglis nanni” (English)? And not merely the gramophone, but every phase of civilisation of which they see but a distorted glimpse, is adding to our weight of responsibility. I could cite many instances, but one or two will suffice. Up in

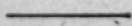
the gold mines, where Sunday is just like any other workday, electricity, gasoline and ice machines are fostering in the Moskito man a distaste for the drudgery of work accomplished by the power of his own strong arm, and he watches the blasting of great rocks, and on returning home with a stolen piece of dynamite will fashion his own hand grenade with which to blast the fish in lagoon or river. He thus obtains a maximum of food with a minimum of labour, for the fish die in shoals and float on the surface of the water; but this process cuts off the neighbourhood's supply of fish for months to come, and any medical missionary here can tell you stories of times when the dynamite has fired prematurely and the man been maimed for life. In one of the mahogany camps recently a gang of Moskito men were deputed to assist in laying the rails for a light railway, and afterwards helped to hoist the locomotive into place. After many mishaps, and having reduced the engineer almost to the verge of insanity by their total incapacity, they at length had the satisfaction of seeing the fussy little second-hand engine pant its way along the lines; and as it disappeared around the first bend they looked at one another and at the assembled crowd for approbation, exclaiming "Lo, the thing we have created." And there is no one in the camps to teach them otherwise—no memory of home to keep them straight. Civilisation, science, invention, materialism—they are all staking out their claims in the mind and heart of the Moskito man! And here and there the missionaries are blazing a trail; but it is for you at home to send us the men and the women and the means to "make straight in the desert a highway for our God," Who through His Son Jesus Christ is alone able to "reconcile these things unto Himself."



EDITORIAL NOTES.



As was stated in the Editorial Notes in our March-April issue, the *Harmony* reached the port of New York on January 1st last, and at that time it was supposed that she would shortly return thence to St. John's, Newfoundland. However, for one reason or another she was delayed in New York harbour until March 26th, after which she sailed for the West Indian Island of Barbados, arriving at Bridgetown, the capital, on April 5th. On April 26th she left that port for St. John's, which was reached on May 12th. Finally, on July 3rd she sailed from St. John's on her first trip to our stations on the Coast of Labrador.



Whilst in the harbours of New York and Bridgetown she put in a good deal of work and passed through some interesting and,

in part, trying experiences. For instance, during a severe gale on February 26th a barge broke loose in the harbour of New York and collided with the *Harmony*, damaging her stem. Extensive repairs became necessary, and this was one of the reasons why the ship was delayed so long at that port.

Then, too, whilst lying in New York harbour our vessel was visited by several members of our Church in America, who seem to have been very favourably impressed with everything they saw on and about the ship. And, in Barbados, the ministers of our various congregations, together with their families and many of our members, repeatedly found their way to the vessel; whilst the captain gave addresses at all our stations on Labrador, its people, the work there, and the adventures of himself and the *Harmony* in those northern waters. Much interest seems to have been aroused thereby in the work of our Church in that missionfield.

Our readers will be interested in the extracts which we publish in this issue of our magazine from some of the early letters received from Labrador this summer. From our introductory note to one of these letters it will be seen that Bishop Albert Martin, who since the year 1889 has been the Superintendent of this Northern Mission, has relinquished that post in favour of Br. W. W. Perrett. This has taken place entirely on his own initiative, and Br. Martin is now resident at the station Hebron, where he will find more time, alongside of his ministerial duties, to continue the revision of the Scriptures in the Eskimo language which he has been working at for some years past.

We are under the painful necessity of bringing to the notice of our readers the resignation of another of our missionaries, who for a considerable number of years has laboured in a climate very different from that of Labrador.

In the closing sentence of his Report on the Weipa mission-station, in North Queensland, Br. Edwin Brown states that this might be his *last* report of the work at that station—and since those words were written our brother has indeed severed his connection with the Mission, and is at present, so far as we know, doing work of some other kind elsewhere in Australia. Serious differences of opinion had arisen between Br. Brown and the Presbyterian Board of Missions, under whose immediate jurisdiction he was working in the first instance, and these have led to the very regrettable steps which have had to be taken by both parties to the dispute. If at all possible, a place will be found for Br. Brown in one of our own mission-fields in tropical lands.

Br. A. B. Romig, the Treasurer of our Mission in the Eastern West India Province, writes in a letter recently to hand that the church at Emmaus, St. Jan, which was razed to the

ground during the hurricane of October, 1916, has not yet been rebuilt, although the bulk, if not, indeed, the whole, of the money required is already in hand. "I cannot get the cement," he writes, "ordered from the United States—the agents always say that food-stuffs must take precedence." In this way also, and in this out-of-the-way little place, the effects of the great world-war are making themselves felt. We sympathise deeply with our members and friends at Emmaus in this time of waiting, and of worshipping in a temporary building so unlike their former beautiful, large stone church.

Our readers will notice that this issue of our quarterly magazine is not any more as fully or as truly an *Annual Report* of our Mission work as was the case even with the September number of last year. This is in part due to the war, but also to the death of the late Bishop B. La Trobe, who, while he was alive and still a member of the Mission Board, did his utmost to furnish us with official reports of at any rate some of the Mission fields. As will be seen, Bishop Hamilton, who is the representative of the American Province of our Church on the Board, from his present place of abode in the United States has supplied us with Reports of the Nicaraguan and Surinam Missions, of which he was, and still is, the official correspondent.

On Wednesday, June 12th, Br. H. W. Weinland and his wife had a marvellous escape in a serious railway accident when on their return journey to California after some months of furlough which they had been spending in the Eastern States. The train in which they were travelling was totally wrecked and several passengers were killed, whilst many others were injured more or less seriously. Our missionary and his wife were badly shaken, but were otherwise unharmed, we are thankful to say. "Watch over Thy messengers by land and sea," we pray in our Litany every Sunday!

The Superintendent's Report of our Surinam Mission, from which Bishop Hamilton has compiled his Notes as given on page 224 of this issue of our magazine, was written early in March of the present year. As will be seen from the opening paragraph of this Report, the importation of provisions was already in 1917 very uncertain and irregular, but so fertile is the soil of the Colony that it was confidently expected actual famine would be averted, *provided normal weather conditions prevailed and local labour exerted itself sufficiently.*

Unfortunately, as we gather from a Trinidad newspaper, the *Guardian*, of May 30th, although the colonists had put forth strenuous efforts to help themselves, abnormal rains during the rainy season had so flooded certain important districts in the Colony that large quantities of ground provisions, corn, and rice had been destroyed and further cultivation seriously retarded.

Starvation was said to be staring the poorer classes of the population in the face, and the outlook for the immediate future was very grave indeed.

MISCELLANEOUS INTELLIGENCE.

NOTES FROM LABRADOR.

THE following extracts from letters received from Labrador on May 15th last will be of interest to our readers. As will be seen from the dates affixed, these letters were four months on the way.

Br. W. W. Perrett, who is now the Superintendent of this northern Mission, in place of Bishop A. Martin, writes on January 3rd from his station, Hopedale :—

Christmas Festivities at Hopedale.

“Without venturing to guess what sort of a Christmas you have spent at home, I will just tell you that we and our people have spent a very happy, joyful time together. The children, and in fact the adults too, thoroughly enjoyed another visit from ‘Father Karismas,’ for which we are greatly indebted to our kind friends in Perth, and we sincerely thank them for the great kindness and generosity they have shown towards us. We have done our utmost to concentrate our thoughts on the meaning of Christmas and the great influence it has on our lives, and, while not forgetting either the national or the individual struggles that are taking place, we have endeavoured to gain courage, strength, and comfort from the fact that Christ Jesus came and still comes to bring peace.

“Though we were not a full congregation, we had a larger proportion of our members present than we had on the two previous Christmas Festivals. The bays froze over about December 9th, so that those of our people who had gone into the bays for sealing and trapping were able to return to the station by ice. Two families from a sea-ward sealing post were not so fortunate. About a week before Christmas they started for Hopedale, hoping by a roundabout journey to reach here in good time. The second day out they ran short of provisions, and, the journey across the land proving more difficult than they had anticipated, they got benighted long before they reached their goal. The only thing for them to do was to make a large fire in the woods, and try to satisfy their hunger with the thought of what they might be eating if they had reached the next house! Day dawned at last and they passed on to a friend’s log-cabin, where they were supplied with the necessaries of life. The ice there was very thin, and, the weather turning somewhat milder, they decided it would be wise to wait a day or two before proceeding. Open water not being

far away, they also thought they might kill a few seals. In this, however, they met with no success. One of the men broke through the thin ice and let his host's rifle drop into the sea. They eventually reached here on New Year's Eve. . . .

The Spiritual Outlook.

"And now a few words about the spiritual outlook of the work among our people. I have no doubt many a minister in the homeland would be glad if he were taken into the confidence of members of his congregation as we in the Mission-field are. Their joys and sorrows, their struggles, their victories, and their failings would often be helpful to him in his work in the congregation. Since our people returned to the station I have had many interesting heart-to-heart talks with some of them, and I rejoice to know that the Holy Spirit is undoubtedly working in many hearts. True, one sees and hears much that is not encouraging—much, that is in fact very discouraging—and in a weak moment one almost feels like crying out: 'Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' But, again, when one hears of the internal and external battles that are fought, when one knows the temptations our people are exposed to, and when one takes into consideration the fact that one is dealing with a primitive people, one cannot but admire the faith and courage that are displayed and the perseverance with which some cleave to their Saviour and strive to walk in the narrow way. But one longs to see a deepening of the spiritual life, and an enlarged grasp of the present blessings of salvation by faith. So many of our people seem to have their own cut-and-dried theories and beliefs, and are so firmly grounded thereon, that it is difficult to get them to advance and take hold of new ideas. And I cannot help thinking that a great deal of their conservativeness is attributable to the very elementary education they receive. Years ago, when a station was staffed by three or four missionaries, the children could and did receive more attention; but to-day that is impossible. It is not through lack of desire or willingness on the missionary's part, but from sheer inability to undertake all he sees might be done.

"Another thing, too, that helps to keep some of them narrow-minded and possessed of one idea is their nomadic life. The winter is what one might call the educational term, both for the children in the school and the adults in the church services. But some of our people seem to be nearly always on the move. The station is 'home'; but this or that family takes a trip into one of the bays for perhaps two or three weeks to catch rock-cod for dogs' food, and to be nearer the indispensable firewood, which is yearly getting more and more difficult to obtain here. Thus they lose the benefits of the church and school; yet there are so many left at the station that the missionary does not feel justified in leaving the many for the few. The two or three weeks spent in visiting the Settlers seem to make such a hole in the winter that one is always working at high pressure to keep up with the

work. I am glad to be able to report that the general health of our people has been good since the summer, no serious cases of illness having occurred."

On January 9th, Br. B. Lenz, who is stationed at Makkovik, the southernmost of our stations, writes as follows:—

Work among the White Settlers.

"Yesterday evening I came back from a five days' trip up the Kippokak Bay, where a middle-aged mother lies sick with rheumatic fever. She contracted this painful illness at the beginning of December, and, being ignorant of the nature of it, would often, when the fever was high and she felt too hot in bed, get up and lie down on the floor to cool herself! Of course, this made things worse and the pain cruel to bear. There was then no chance to come for medicine, as the bay was only just beginning to freeze over. When at last, at Christmas-time, the ice was strong enough, there was so much loose snow that nobody could attempt to make a long journey with comatic and dogs, a man walked here on snowshoes, and arrived on the third day. The woman had then been without sleep for twelve days and nights. Two of her relatives here undertook at once to take her some medicine, which brought the sorely needed relief and sleep. But a week later a comatic arrived from there with the news that she had had a serious relapse. As travelling conditions had improved meanwhile, I set out next day to go and see her. One of our settlers here willingly placed himself and his comatic and dogs at my disposal, and in two days' time we reached the sufferer. God again blessed the means employed, and she soon found relief and sleep again. We hope she may now steadily recover. Many of our people here find it hard to submit to the absolutely needful precautions which such a malicious sickness requires of them.

"When once up that deep bay, I used the opportunity also for visiting the other families living here and there in Kippokak. There are nine houses there, mostly several miles apart from each other. I always consider it a privilege to visit these isolated homes and to be perhaps the bringer of some cheer to lonely souls, and of encouragement to walk in the ways of God."

Br. H. Asboe, who is at present in charge of the hospital at Okak, sends us the following notes, written on February 21st, 1918:—

Okak Hospital Notes.

"We are in the throes of real Labrador weather now, and have been for the whole of this month. January was remarkably mild, and the brook between the church and the hospital was still running; and when the frost did actually come we experienced rather an anxious time here in the hospital, as the stream drained (?) and literally flowed under our building. All anxiety was, however, soon removed when the very severe frost set in and the brook dried up. Still, we had quite a pond of water under the hospital, 4 ft. deep in places.

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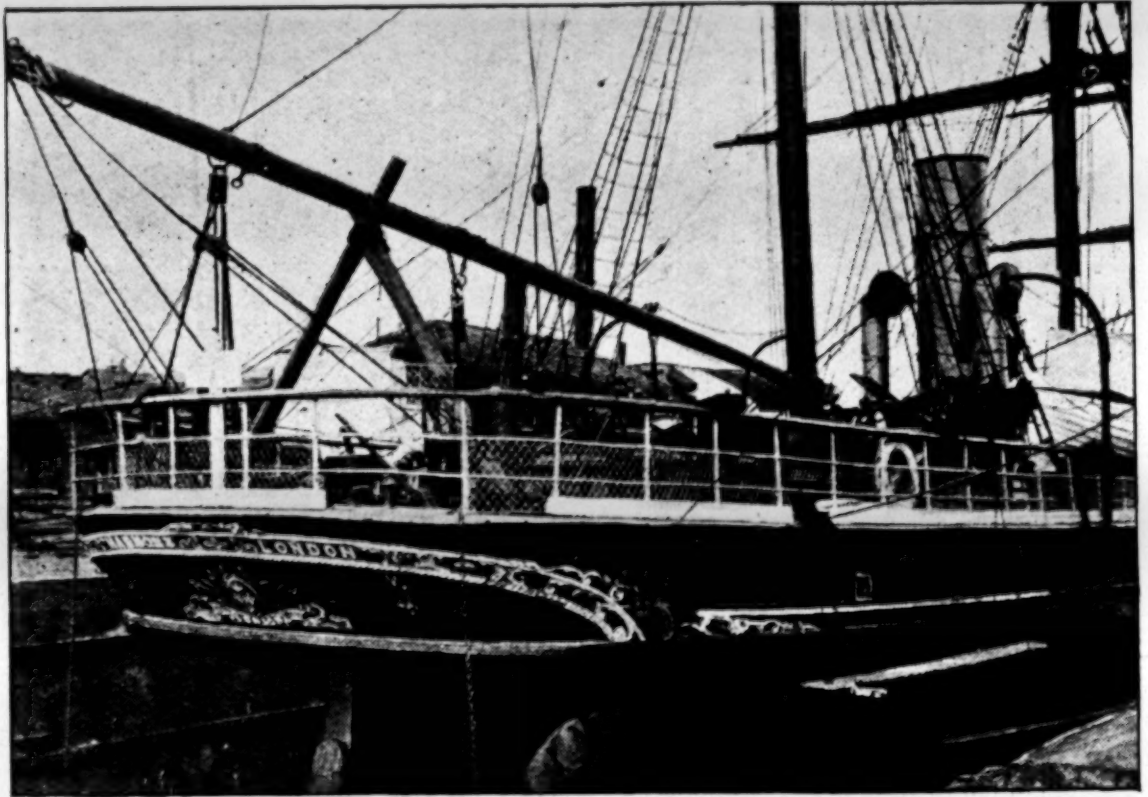
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"The work in the hospital has not been slack, although the health of the people has been simply splendid so far this winter, and promises to continue so. Most of my cases that have required constant attention have been surgical. A medical visit was paid to Hebron in January, during very mild weather, which necessitated our having to travel both ways across country. This was a most fortunate experience for me personally, as it had been my wish to do so for a long time. The land does not lie high; much of the ground we passed over was barren—splendid feeding ground for deer, which we actually sighted. The men declared the company must have consisted of over 300, but I could not vouch for the truth of this. The weather was unfavourable—a heavy mist hanging over everything made sighting a difficult task. Foxes were numerous. While passing over the land we saw 17 in one day, mostly red. The people are doing well with foxes. From Hebron we brought a sick man here; it was a case needing special and immediate attention, blood-poisoning having set in in the middle finger of the right hand. The day after I arrived I amputated the offending member, and the man was greatly relieved. In three weeks' time the wound had completely healed up. He and his wife are here in the hospital still, waiting for a sledge to take them home.

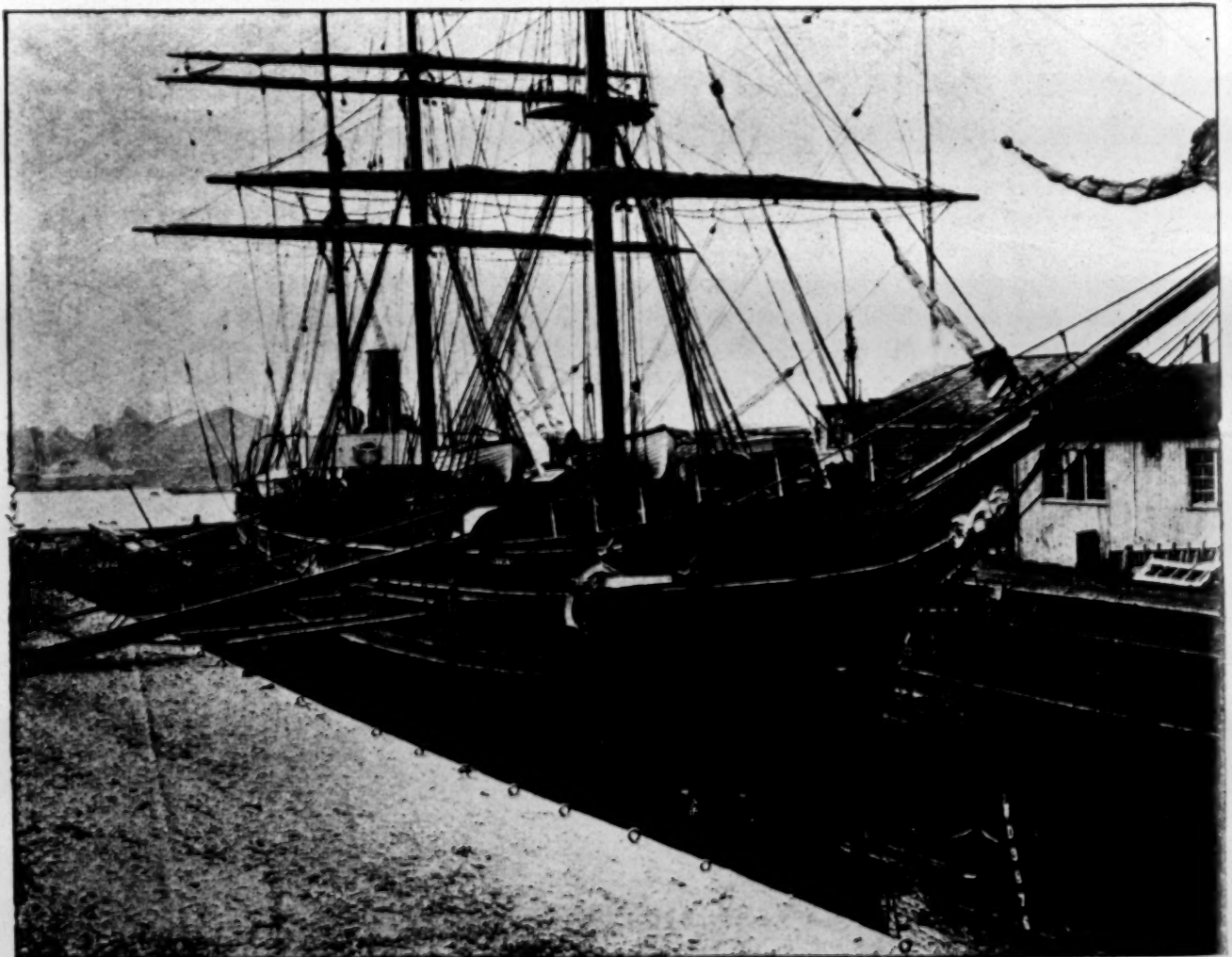
No idle days at Okak.

"We do not spend idle days in Okak. There is the missionary up to his eyebrows in work with the innumerable week-night services, and the school and confirmation candidates in addition. There is the store-keeper, who is harassed with the material wants of the community; and then there comes the doctor—or, rather, we ought to say the one who is acting as doctor—who has to deal with the results often of too much indulgence in material things. Here in Labrador, at any rate, we do not suffer from *tedium vitæ*. The intense cold does not permit of any such thing. But we are not oblivious of the fact that thousands of our brethren at home have been driven to this stage, as this weary and awful conflict, the war, drags on. In some degree our folk over here have had occasion to realise what awful suffering this conflict involves. By means of some war slides kindly lent us, our Okak people have seen something of what war really means. And they are awe-struck, amazed. They are clamouring to see the slides again and to listen to the explanation of each one in their own tongue. . . .

"Our Evening English Classes for the young men and girls—twice a week each party in turn—are going ahead well, and we feel quite encouraged. The numbers keep up well. Now and again I show them magic lantern views of different countries. The grammar part of our language is far too much of a mystery for them. Their interest lies more in a desire to learn the names of 'things.' One realises continually that but little achievement may be expected: these young fellows and girls should have been taught a little English long ago; we are beginning at the wrong end."



THE *Harmony* IN DRY DOCK. BACK VIEW.



THE *Harmony* IN DRY DOCK. FRONT VIEW.